United Nations A/70/757–S/2016/176

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
24 February 2016

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda item 34 (a)
Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 22 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the second anniversary of the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34 (a), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 22 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the second anniversary of the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation

20 February 2016

Two years ago, the Russian Federation, by committing an armed aggression against Ukraine, began the process of rewriting post-war history and violated the norms of international law, which are the basis of peaceful coexistence. Russia ceased to be a part of the civilized world and has become a pariah State.

Russian military personnel in green uniforms without any insignia became a symbol of a hybrid war, and their arrival in the Ukrainian Crimea started the Kremlin's blatant flouting of international law and violation of human rights in the occupied peninsula. Under the Russian occupation, Crimea has become a "grey zone" where injustice, terror, intimidation, kidnapping and torture prevail. Occupation authorities commit systematic and large-scale violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, wage a hidden war against dissidents and destroy the signs of the linguistic, religious and cultural identity of Ukrainians and the indigenous people of Crimea: Crimean Tatars. The actions of the Russian authorities aimed at banning Majlis activity, as well as political processes against Crimean Tatars in the occupied peninsula, clearly prove the tyranny of the occupants.

The international community has unanimously expressed its solidarity with Ukraine in its fight against Russian armed aggression. Democratic nations condemned the occupation and imposed sanctions against Russia and its leadership in order to restore the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Ukraine demands that the Russian Federation stop the occupation, repression and numerous provocations against Ukrainian citizens and pro-Ukrainian people of the Crimean peninsula.

We call on the international community to increase political and diplomatic pressure on Russia, as the occupying State, and to support Ukraine's initiative of establishing an international platform to discuss the issues that are vitally important to the people of the occupied peninsula and the entire international community.